BALLET TODAY

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FONTEYN and SOMES

Ballet Today

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Cover Portrait: Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes in The Sleeping Beauty (television performance) Photo: Mike Davis.

STILL further increases in printing and block-making costs have made it necessary for the price of the magazine to be put up by another threepence a month, as from this issue. I do so with regret, as at a time when the credit squeeze and the rising cost of living is making everyone watch their pennies, I realise only too well that even threepence makes a difference in the budgeting, especially amongst our younger readers. No big profits are made on a specialist magazine, and when production costs go up we have no alternative but to pass them on, or perish, many small magazines indeed have done so in the past few months. I hope therefore that you will think the increase a worthwhile expense, and still excellent value for the money. You will be helping us tremendously if you place a firm order with your newsagent or railway bookstall so that we can avoid waste in printing more copies than we require each month.

VISCOUNT WAVERLEY'S recent statement to the press that the Royal Opera House Covent Garden is showing a heavy deficit over and above the Arts Council subsidy for the year has let loose a spate of letters to the newspapers from taxpayers who are not interested in ballet, and who loudly proclaim "why waste our money on ballet and opera which very few people want to see". The inaccuracy of this statement is made clear in an excellent little booklet issued recently entitled "A Review 1946-56" which sets out the economics of ballet and opera as they have been encountered at the Opera House during the past ten years. One and a half million people throughout the country yearly attend performances of opera and ballet. There are two thousand two hundred seats in Covent Garden, and the Directors have every reason to be proud of the fact that opera and ballet audiences have averaged 84 per cent. of the full capacity attendance of the house for the last five years; a record that is outstanding in any theatre. The expenses of a normal year however now amount to £730,000, and after allowing for other receipts the total income is £382,000, showing a deficit of £348,000. The subsidy from the Arts Council last year amounted to £250,000, leaving a gap of £98,000, with rapidly rising costs it is estimated that this deficit will be in the neighbourhood of £100,000 a year, in fact it has been given this year at £110,000. The only way this deficit can be met is by an increased subsidy, and by raising the price of seats. The latter course has been adopted recently, but there are still five hundred seats in the gallery at 5/- or less. This is as it should be, for these two arts should be made available to the student and others whose purse would not run to the higher prices.

There are those who think that too large a share of the Arts Council grant reaches London instead of being more evenly distributed in other cities. On the face of it, it does seem a fair complaint, but as this booklet points out the Sadler's Wells Ballet both here and abroad have reached so high a pitch that few are likely to question the need for its continuance. The Royal Opera House is today playing a larger part in the life of the nation than ever before in its history, and special performances of opera and ballet are becoming a regular feature of the hospitality offered by Her Majesty's Government to foreign royal guests, heads of state and other important visitors.

The need for provincial touring is understood, and is in fact being catered for as far as possible, but here again finance comes into it. The cost of building scenery to fit the stage at Covent Garden is so high that it is financially impossible to build a second and smaller set to fit smaller stages in the provincial cities. There is also the extra cost of transportation and housing of people and material, and the prices of the seats in the provinces are much lower than in London. The present measure of loss on opera touring is £2,900 a week, while the ballet tours make only a slight profit.

All over the world Opera Houses have to be subsidised, to a far greater extent than the figures quoted here, the French and Italian Governments each have to spend approximately a million pounds sterling, one city alone, Hamburg, contributes a quarter of a million pounds. If prestige is still an operative factor in the granting of subsidies, then the Royal Opera House London has won that prestige in no small measure, and it must be maintained.

The next time you go to the Opera House look around you and listen, you will see and hear visitors from every country in the world. This country should be grateful to the Directors of Covent Garden for their work in the past. They should not be hampered now in maintaining what has become a source of prestige and pride to every Englishman who likes to see Britain respected for her contributions whether it be to the realms of art, literature or sport.

A genius can use his medium with such skill that the result of his labour is effortless and apparently simple. This has been so well illustrated in the work of Frederick Ashton that when he turns out one excellent offering after another we are rather inclined to take it for granted.

Whilst no-one can find fault with the honours bestowed on the women in ballet, it is noticeable that similar honours have been withheld from the men. The work of men like Frederick Ashton and Michael Somes surely warrants recognition, for not only have they contributed in no small measure to the cultural life of our nation, but they have built up prestige for Britain in many countries of the world.

Frederick Ashton is responsible for 35 major works in the repertoire of the Sadler's Wells Ballet, and with all due deference to the other fine artists and producers in the Company there would probably not have been a Sadler's Wells Company had this man of genius not been born at the right time.

The exchange of Companies from the Bolshoi and our own Sadler's Wells is another step forward, not only towards the better understanding between the people of two great nations, through the medium of an art which is international, but as ambassadors of the cultural life of our nation, which is reflected in our way of life.

This great man of our time should be honoured, now, whilst at the zenith of his career. We cannot think of any other person whose name has more right to appear on the New Year's Honours list.

If we are to believe our story books the knights of old were modest self-effacing men who, with the odds against them, showed they were men of courage. Looking back over the years of Frederick Ashton's life this description exactly fits this man. Today he is always the first to accord praise to others; let us not forget that it must have taken plenty of courage, as well as hard work and ability, to establish ballet, the youngest of the arts, so firmly and brilliantly in the life of our nation, over a period of twenty-five years. Can we hope that his work will be publicly acknowledged and that *Sir* Frederick Ashton will return from Moscow ?

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BALLET TODAY

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THE photograph of the four swans which we have incorporated into our design for *Backstage* heading this month, was taken from behind the stage of the Zurich, Stadtheater by **W. E. Baur** during the recent successful production of *Lac*. A report on the season in Zurich will be included in our next issue.

BALLET IN ISRAEL

ANTON Dolin is giving his support to the idea of forming an Israel ballet group, and has promised to secure two or three yearly scholarships for budding Israel dancers to appear with the corps of Festival Ballet during their yearly nine-week season in London. This idea came into being as a result of the Company's triumphant seven week's tour of Israel, during which time they played to packed houses in the cities of Jerusalem, Haifa, Tel Aviv, and the Jordan Valley, near Tiberias. On the evening before they left Israel, Festival Ballet danced to an audience of eighteen thousand people in the open-air stadium at Ramat Gan, near Tel Aviv.

WISHFUL THINKING?

KEITH Woods, Editor of *En Avant*, writing on the exchange of Sadler's Wells and the Bolshoi Company: "may the borders of every country be opened by the interchange of the arts—and maybe, even though the distance is so great, when the arts have civilised the world, they will manage to visit the small, far-off, outposts such as New Zealand".

NEVER A DULL MOMENT

THINGS have been happening to the orchestra at the Festival Hall lately. At the first press night of the season one of the strings snapped with a loud *ping*. At the second, one of the dancers sent her shoe flying amongst them. Needless to say, those in the line of vision, ducked, to the great amusement of the audience.

GOLDEN JUBILEE

ON December 20th, 1956, Miss **Phyllis Bedells** will celebrate the Golden Jubilee of her debut in London, and she is planning to give a party to all her pupils past and present to mark the occasion.

Will all past students write to Miss Bedells, giving their present addresses so that suitable arrangements can be made in good time. Letters to: 28, Quex Road, London, N.W.6.

FILM NEWS

GUYS AND DOLLS, the smash-hit musical, now filmed by M.G.M. will have its British première at the Empire Theatre, Leicester Square, on September 19th. The gala showing, which will be attended by Mr. Samuel Goldwyn, is in aid of the Variety Club Heart Fund for under-privileged children, and the British Council for the Welfare of Spastics. The dance sequences in this film are brilliant, and I predict that whether you liked the musical or not, you will undoubtedly enjoy the film.

Another M.G.M. film now released, which dance lovers will enjoy, is *Viva Las Vegas*, featuring **Cyd Charisse**, dancing with **John Brascia**, in a Frankie and Johnny ballet, and which tells the story of a ballerina who is doubtful whether she can combine a dancing career with marriage.

GOOD CAUSE

THOSE connected with the ballet always feel close to the musician. Consequently the work of the Musicians Benevolent Fund, whose president is **Sir Arthur Bliss** (*Checkmate* and *Miracle of the Gorbals*) is of interest. The Fund runs and maintains the St. Cecilia Convalescent Home at Westgate-on-Sea, a unique spot where red tape and restrictions have been hidden and only humanity and kindliness shine out for patients and visitors.

Recently the Fund celebrated the Home's anniversary by inviting to the Home, members of the music and nursing professions. Among those present were **Baroness Ravensdale** (treasurer of the Fund), **Countess Jowitt,** and **Montague Calman**.

Frank Thistleton, the Fund's general secretary will always be happy to tell readers about the work of the Fund.

SCHOOL FOR TEACHERS

OWING to the rapid advance which Ballet is making in the field of general education and hygiene, there is an increasing demand for teachers of the art. With this in mind, Miss **Barbara Reeve-Fowkes,** principal of the Eastbourne School of Dancing, embodies a very wide range of different subjects necessary in the teaching career. Academic training, production, choreography, examination coaching, programme designing and general school management are but a few of the items dealt with in her curriculum.

LUCKY LONDON

READERS from many parts of the world have not failed to notice that London is now entering perhaps the most brilliant ballet season of all time. "As a temporarily exiled British balletomane" writes telegraphist E. M. Coles-Maby, "I shall miss the Americans, Sadler's Wells and the Bolshoi. Can you find me a pen friend to recount this to me?" Requests have also come in for souvenirs of Ulanova, programmes, posters, ballet shoes, autographed pictures and even the dress worn by her in the ballroom scene of *Romeo and Juliet*.

THIS MONTH

DUAL CAREER

the story of

SOLEDAD MIRALLES

Dancer
and
Bullfighter

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CAREER IN PICTURES

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Photo opposite: *The Miller's wife in* Tricorne.

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LONDON BALLET MONTH

By

A. V. COTON

Left: *The full company in the finale of Festival Ballet's* Homage to a Princess.
Photo: - - - - - *Leon Ward*

Right: *Rosella Hightower.*

JULY marks the end of the academic year not only in high school and university, but also in the sphere of dance training; and July is the month for end-of-term shows, for teachers' conferences, and for congresses. The most impressive of these—mainly because of its vast coverage and its air of total professionalism—is the annual congress of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing. This body, over fifty years old, exists to provide teachers and dancers with standards for their work, and has grown up only because of the devotion, planning and practical work put into it by a number of leading personalities in all branches of the art of Dance.

Its present eleven sections cover such diverse activities as, for instance, Old Time Dancing, Latin American, Modern Ballroom and Revived Greek Dance, as well as three very vital departments, important to all developments to-day in every form of theatre-dance; these are the Historical, Cecchetti and Modern Stage Dance sections. The 8-day congress included lectures, demonstrations, discussions and social functions which engaged members of each and every section. The sessions given to analyses and live demonstrations of the Cecchetti method of ballet training were a revelation of the order, economy, total physical understanding, which underlie this acutely sensible and scientific system.

The demonstrations of every phase of the work from first childrens' grade up to advanced students in the major syllabus, were of an exciting kind. They had the air of being done by dancers already on their way to professionalism—unlike most school performances, which reveal too much of the atmosphere of the classroom and not enough of a suggestion of a theatre, even if that theatre is still in the future.

Similarly, the work of the Modern Stage Branch showed people dealing with immediate and important problems in choreography, dance-style, manner of production, etc. Two leading dancers in West End shows, both with long dance experience in ballet companies (Denys Palmer and Nigel Burke), analysed, discussed and demonstrated their views of what modern musicals call for in the way of "modern ballet". Another demonstration by pupils of several leading London dance schools showed examples of almost every kind of dancing—medieval, 18th century, ballroom demonstration, tap, jive, modernistic, etc.

A final lecture on various historical styles, how they were probably danced at the time, how we have learned about them, how to dance them, the sort of music and costumes to use—all this combined into one of the most exciting occasions of the congress. This sort of summer school has a good deal to teach not only the active dance pupil and the teacher, but also the dance-follower, the historian and the critic; in the way that a fine library is indispensible to anyone who writes or thinks for a living, so a planned, orderly, well-packed dance congress such as this can provide material for a thousand questions (and, possibly, some of their answers too) that anyone interested in dancing should have constantly in mind.

* * *

Among other summery functions was the occasion of the Royal Academy of Dancing's Annual Address, when Dame Margot Fonteyn de Arias presented the Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Award—for outstanding services to the art of Ballet—to Madame Rambert.

* * *

Of a more public nature were such events as the shows of Polish and Sinhalese dancing, given on 14th and 22nd respectively. The Poles were a troupe of dancers and singers from Lodz, paying a short visit here and giving two shows only at the Scala Theatre. For anyone who had already seen much Polish dancing, this was a repeat performance of most of the well-known Polish idioms and local dances; for the newcomer it was impressive in showing the individual quality of the dances, the highly ornate costumes, and the vigour and style of performance.

The Sinhalese occasion was promoted by the Asian Music Society which has put on a number of these programmes of the folk music and folk dancing of various countries. What was most obvious here was the sharp distinction between the folk arts of Ceylon and those of India; despite their nearness and their mutual influences over many centuries, the two countries have kept variant forms of dancing. Although to the European eye there are many similarities, there are also significant strong differences; this is most easily notable in the womens' dances which are less complex in pattern, but with more obviously dramatic gesture, than similar-style Indian dancing. Anura performed drum-dances and his female pupils the other items; notable among them being a Miss Nirmala, who had the air (and the grace, too) of a thoroughly professional performer of this exotic style.

* * *

Festival Ballet's season shows a company in well-drilled condition, with some stunning performers among the top-rankers; the two new offerings fall into the category of so many of this company's modern ballets—good efforts, mostly made and danced with sincerity, but rarely amounting to anything startling in the way of choreography. Michael Charnley's *Homage to a Princess* has music by Stan Kenton which seems neither more nor less suitable than any other jazz-type score would be for a balletic form of dancing. It also has rather eye-taking costumes in the Monegasque colours of crimson and white, but designed so that they did not help the lines of flow of the movements. The shape of the ballet is vague—a series of five sections in one of which the principals, Belinda Wright and John Gilpin, dance a neat, rather complex, and effective *pas-de-deux*; very little else had any "shape" and it appeared to have been mostly a montage of dance ideas from anywhere roughly matched to the rhythms of the music.

The second novelty, Wolfgang Brunner's *Les deux Errants* given on 30th, showed a serious approach to choreographic problems. Its

theme (two lost souls meeting and so finding themselves capable of coping with life's problems) is scarcely novel; but it does well enough as a peg for Mr. Brunner's ideas of how to make a male and a female dancer move a little differently—which is, after all, the primary problem of any choreographer nowadays. Belinda Wright and Michael Hogan as the strangers who strike, at first resentment, and then sympathy, out of each other, managed to make this well-worn subject matter seem less obvious than we are accustomed to; (after all, ballets about Coping With Life have been getting made all round us for at least the last twenty years). The smart decor, consisting of live dancers and dead walls equally masked in a scribbled black-and-white design, looked good for the subject; as the live parts came into movement now and then, one guessed that they represented some force which tried either to hinder or help the lovers in their task of finding one another. Altogether, despite its not very fresh material, this was a good first effort; praise be to any apprentice choreographer who, for a first ballet, does not try to outsmart Balanchine at pure classicism, Massine at cunning characterisation, nor Tudor at psychological profundity.

This was a modest, simply thought-out, and carefully worked-out piece of original choreography: it was danced with perfect comprehension by its two principals, who have done their choreographer a good service in making his first work as fully interesting as its theme and its dance-style could permit.

NEW YORK

Hope Sheridan's Report on the Season

ON Tuesday, April 17th, Ballet Theatre began its three week Spring season at the Metropolitan. Featured in the scheme of twenty-eight ballets were two premières and three revivals. Guest artists for the season were Sono Osato, James Mitchell, Muriel Bentley, Yurek Lazowsky and Maria Karnilova.

The opening night's programme offered *Theme and Variations* with Rosella Hightower (newly returned to the company) and Erik Bruhn; *Pillar of Fire* with Nora Kaye, Hugh Laing, Lucia Chase, Barbara Lloyd and Anthony Tudor; *Caprichos* featuring Lupe Serrano, John Kriza and Ruth Ann Koesun; *Graduation Ball* with Harold Lang (back with the company after season in Broadway musicals), Ruth Ann Koesun and Scott Douglas.

After a number of years in the Marquis de Cuevas' company Miss Hightower is not yet acclimatised to the essentially simple style of an American company. This was particularly apparent in the opening night's *Theme and Variations*, although this variance of style continued to lessen as the season progressed. Much of the lyricism necessary for Balanchine's work was missing, and her attack was brittle. Erik Bruhn proved to be a beautiful dancer who is in constant rapport with his partner.

Highlight of the evening remained Tudor's powerful *Pillar of Fire* with Nora Kaye giving a superb performance as the tormented Hagar.

April 18th offered the first of the season's premières—Tudor's *Offenbach in the Underworld* set to a mélange of Offenbach tunes arranged by David Simon, with scenery and costumes by René Bouché. The action of the plot centres around a fashionable café in the 1870's. People from all walks of life frequent the bar and as often as not find their partners for the evening are not those with whom they arrived. By closing time, however, order (social, that is) has been restored and all leave with their respective escorts, and a few memories.

The ballet was originally set for the National Ballet of Canada, who shewed it here last year. Tudor has changed much of the choreography and great sections of the score are new. However it is still a long tedious ballet with very little to recommend it. It offers little or no opportunity for its stars Nora Kaye, Hugh Laing, John Kriza, Lupe Serrano, Scott Douglas and Ruth Ann Koesun. There is an interesting, very much in period can-can for the corps of girls and a charming variation for John Kriza in a character rôle, but little else in the ballet.

Highlight of the evening was the opening *Swan Lake* with Rosella Hightower and Erik Bruhn. Miss Hightower was much closer to the old superb form with which we remember her. Her lyricism has returned, and she now possesses a new-found elegance. Erik Bruhn is a joy to watch, his performance is a veritable lesson in the phrase "a true classical schooling". His variation containing a series of double tours, pirouettes finishing with grande ronde de jambes into arabesque were superbly performed and quite breathtaking.

First revival of the season was Anthony Tudor's *Undertow* given on April 19th. It is a case history, and a surface-deep one at that, of the emotional development of a transgressor. His complexes and compulsive reactions stemming, we are told, from his babyhood rejection by his mother. This eventually evolves into his murder of a sensuous woman. Tudor's ballet does not stand the test of time, and today looks very much like a cheap, nickel's worth of psycho-neurosis luridly prepared for the layman. In the intervening years between its première and revival, the glamour of schizoid behaviour on stage has lessened considerably, and today the ballet simply looks and is a sordid, drab tale with very little balletically or dramatically to offer an audience. Hugh Laing in the rôle of the transgressor does his best to hold the ballet together.

Highlight of the evening remained the old warhorse, the pas de deux from *Swan Lake, Act III*, in which Nora Kaye and Erik Bruhn gave exciting performances.

The second première of the season was Agnes de Mille's *The Rib of Eve*, presented April 25th. Set to music by Morton Gould with scenery by Oliver Smith, and costumes by Irene Sharaff, the ballet is a "morality play, consisting of a series of parties and their aftermaths". The plot concerns itself with the frenetic lives of a young married couple, she, very much of a social butterfly, and he very much opposed to it all. Somewhere along the line the Hostess, played by Nora Kaye, places her social activities above those of her wifely ones. Her husband, played patiently by James Mitchell, has his fill, and after trying to reason with her gives the whole thing up as a lost cause. After much soul searching the wife realises her mistake, and returns to her husband. At the final curtain however, we have the distinct feeling this may happen all over again.

While *Rib of Eve* has many very amusing choreographic moments, it is literally a rehash of everything de Mille has ever produced before. All the standard de Mille gestures, pieces of stage business . . . we have seen it time and time again. Possibly with severe cutting this might be an amusing twenty-minute ballet, but not in its present length which is somewhere in the vicinity of forty minutes. Nora Kaye and James Mitchell both give excellent performances, while Barbara Lloyd and Darrell Notara give able assistance accompanied by the corps de ballet. Clever and cosmopolitan scenery and music by Oliver Smith and Morton Gould.

Dim Lustre, the second revival on the schedule was presented on

April 26th. Boasting scenery and elegant fin de siècle costumes by Motley, and set to Richard Strauss' theatrical "Burleske", *Dim Lustre* when it was first produced was one of Tudor's more successful ballets. However it was always a ballet which depended more on stage effects than on actual choreographic content. As time passed, cues were forgotten, gestures and timing changed, in short much of the minutae vital to the theatrical effectiveness of this ballet disappeared. Today in its revival the ballet appears shoddy. Much of the wit has lost its edge through the fact that many of the vignettes are now blurred in their outlines rather than sharp and sardonic as they once were. Nora Kaye, Hugh Laing and Sonia Arova work hard, but it looks as if *Dim Lustre* is beyond repair.

On the same bill was Ballet Theatre's version of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. This ballet is still pitched continually on too high a key, but it offers Nora Kaye and John Kriza ample opportunity for fine dramatic performances. Miss Kaye proves again that she is our foremost dramatic ballerina, and for that matter, one of our finest actresses. Her portrayal of the bedevilled Blanche is no less than superb. Kriza is slowly becoming a fine character dancer. His Stanley, if still lacking in some respects, is growing steadily. Scott Douglas does yeoman service as Mitch.

By far the happiest revival of the season was Agnes de Mille's *Tally-Ho!* which I saw on May 5th. Present also were guest artists Sono Osato and Muriel Bentley. This charming and witty ballet which has absolutely nothing to do with fox hunting, has been given a lively revival. Its main roles are all in the hands of mature artists whose timing and definition of gesture are sure. Muriel Bentley is superb as chief courtesan and John Kriza gives a masterful performance as the Prince. Following closely the pattern set by Dolin many years ago for this rôle, he nevertheless makes the characterisation completely his own. Sono Osato, Darrell Notara and Barbara Lloyd give creditable performances. After all these years *Tally-Ho* shows its strength of structure.

Tudor's bitter but brilliant *Judgment of Paris* received a magnificent performance in the same bill by Maria Karnilova, Agnes de Mille and Lucia Chase. I maintain that this ballet is one of Tudor's masterpieces. Definitely wormwood—but what excellent wormwood!

I cannot close without a passing bouquet to Rosella Hightower's *Giselle*. Act I, is of course the weaker of the two acts, as it always is where a classical dancer is concerned. Although Hightower's mime is clear and her progression from gaiety to madness logical, her performance is not a moving one. Far better is her Act II, which is pure and extremely lyrical. Erik Bruhn is one of the finest Albrecht's I have ever seen. His Act I is excellent and Act II is magnificent. He is gallant, noble, young, and completely convincing. His mime has stature and his dancing is clean.

The weakness of the Ballet Theatre at this point is in its corps de ballet, which is far from its once high level, and the same remark applies to the second line dancers.

CHICAGO ★ END OF SEASON ★

By GEORGE JACKSON

AT season's end, the merry month of May, Chicago was visited by New York City's Metropolitan Opera. Comparisons with our own Lyric Theatre's opera and ballet productions were inevitable, but not justified since Lyric Theatre is not yet a full season institution. It is difficult to be consistently brilliant almost all year, at home as well as on tour, and understandably some of the Met's performances were not of the highest musical calibre. However, from the visual point of view, Dino Yannopoulos' groupings and movements for the singing chorus were superb. Zachary Solov's dances were often interesting per se and always cleverly integrated with an opera's action.

Also in May, Chicago Ballet Guild presented something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue. First on the programme was the thing borrowed. *The August Witch*, (originally presented at the choreographer's workshop of Richard Ellis and Christine DuBoulay), is not a good ballet. However, its creator, Dom Orejudos, is certainly a choreographer of promise. He does not yet know how to choose a danceable story or work with music (Beethoven was used), but he can create a choreography which is more than a string of merely pleasing steps. Though his movements fail to present the action, they express the feeling of the characters without ever forcing the performers. In leading rôles, Bonnie Black, Hy Somers, Betsy Herskind and the choreographer showed themselves as beautifully trained dancers.

The something new was *The Flame*, an autobiographical ballet by Charles Bockman, with music by Neal Kayan and sets by Gerald Ritholz. In six scenes, Mr. Bockman tells of his early career as a dancer, the end of this career due to disease and the birth of his new profession of choreographer and teacher. Unfortunately, the ballet's three opening scenes are interesting only in retrospect; while one watches there is no suggestion of the struggle to come. This may be "true to life" but it is not good art. The fourth scene, in a neurologist's office, is certainly interesting. But the style, grotesque to the point of comedy and yet with a touch of sentimentality, is at odds with the situation of the moment and the style of the ballet as a whole. Only by the final scene, with its intricate and inspired pas de deux, is the ballet vindicated.

The programme's something blue was a bit from Massine's *Gaité Parisienne*, so brief that it seemed pointless.

Kabelevsky's *The Comedians*, in Lloyd Tygett's choreography, is an old favourite. There were some revisions, notably an insane little Salome number, but the ballet was, and is, one of the few American dance creations with a mature, genuine sense of humour.

PARIS ★ STANISLAVSKI BALLET ★ By FERDINAND REYNA

THE 72 dancers of the Stanislavski and Nemirovitch-Dantchenko National Lyric Theatre had their opening night on 11th June at the Chatelet—the very theatre where, once upon a time, Serge de Diaghilev presented himself for the first time to a Parisian public. The history of this Company goes back to 1918. Then, Constantin Stanislavski, the renovator of Russian dramatic art, opened his first "opera studio" and the lyric art was soon to benefit from the influence that the director of the Art's Theatre exerted on dramatic interpretation. The last twenty years of his life were to be devoted to purging the opera of its hackneyed expressions and outworn ideas. *Eugène Onegin* was his first success, and in 1926 the studio was granted a permanent lodging, Stanislavski's opera theatre was born.

At the same time Nemirovitch Dantchenko—a former collaborator of Stanislavski—was applying the master's principles to comic opera and operettas, and the star dancer Victorina Krieger was inculcating those same principles in the young troupe at the Ballet Art Theatre. Finally, in 1941, a Governmental decree combined the two theatres of Stanislavski and Dantchenko in one organisation. The ballet company resulting from this union made remarkable progress just after the war under the influence of Vladimir Bourmeister.

In Paris, the company is presenting the complete version of *Swan Lake*. A second programme includes *Straussiana*—a one-act ballet on Johann Strauss' music; the second act of *Esmeralda*; the third act of Assafiev's ballet *The Fountain of Bakchisarai* and two tableaux from *The Merry Wives of Windsor* to music by Oranski.

The third programme comprises solos, from both classical and modern ballets. The premières danseuses of the company (there are no stars in the U.S.S.R.) are Violette Boyt, Nina Timofeiva, Alla Ossipienko, Sophia Vinogradova and Nina Vlassova. The male premiers danseurs are Koustzienskov, Salop and Tchitchivadzé.

The first show rather disappointed all concerned. No miracles occurred—or only one—and Paris was (wrongly) expecting a second master-stroke like Diaghilev's. Instead, people found a very good troupe of dancers, and Bourmeister the choreographer had done an interesting piece of work in the first act of *Lac*; he has cleverly worked the character dances into the ensemble of the choreography in such a way that one doesn't have the usual impression of separate "numbers", so that the dance and scenic action are integrated. In the second act, the dance of the four cygnets was admirable for its precision and the perfection of the ensemble. The third act, we thought, was the most characteristic; the figure of the Magician Rothbart stood out in relief, compared with the role of this personage in other companies, and the Black Swan is really a dance of malevolence, splendidly danced by Sophia Vinogradova. Even though spectacular exhibitions have been abolished, the general technique is visibly strong. The men are very robust and can easily lift their partners at arm's length, but they have less personality than the great dancers of our own companies.

There is nothing to be said about the settings and costumes, they are insignificant and give no evidence of any spirit of research. On the other hand, the score of the ballet was given in its original entirety putting back what had been taken out and removing what had been arbitrarily inserted in other choreographic versions. It might be said that the whole of the danced part of this *Swan Lake* is interesting, especially in the ensembles, but that the personality of the artists does not make itself felt. We do not say that it does not exist, but they all seem to have a certain reticence in free expression.

However at the second and third performances, the corps de ballet had got over that first difficult moment of contact with the public, and the dancing was good enough to make one forget the settings. In the Stanislavski Ballet, the prima ballerina played all the roles in turn,

and we discovered a real young star—Alla Ossipienko of Leningrad—a twenty-three year old pupil of Vaganova who began dancing at the age of three. Sensitive, muscular yet delicate, with very lovely arms, she danced Odette-Odile and earned a score of curtain calls.

The ensemble movements, when we saw them from closer range, appeared in all their beauty. *Swan Lake*, as it is presented by the Stanislavski Ballet, is so homogeneous in all its parts that one feels for the first time that the second act—usually given the title of *Swan Lake*—is only a fragment of the whole, and that this ballet is not unduly long when it is presented in such animated fashion. For the first time, we have been allowed to hear Tchaikovsky's score in its entirety, and in the right order. The Black Swan music which we always hear in the third act, is given in the Stanislavski ballet in the first tableau along with the ensemble dances, and in the third act the Russian composer's score is followed logically.

The second programme included *Straussiana*, a one-act ballet (choreography by Bourmeister) in which we saw the prima ballerina Vlassova. It is meant to recall the Blue Danube but of course it has nothing in common with Leonide Massine's celebrated ballet.

The third act of *The Fountain of Bakchisarai* (music by Assafiev, choreography by Zaharov) left the audience rather cold. The first tableau from the second act of *Esmeralda* (music by Drigo, choreographer Bourmeister) took us back seventy years, and one can describe it frankly as an "historical piece"—very interesting though, for nothing has been done to modernise it. The settings, costumes and choreography are all in the period—of Petipa. The role of Esmeralda was interpreted by E. Vlassova, who danced beautifully.

Finally, we repeat about these Soviet performances what we wrote in this Review some time ago, when Galina Ulanova and Youri Kundratov appeared at the Florence Festival. It is as if time has stood still since the moment Diaghilev left Russia—the male dancer has a very inconspicuous role, the ensembles are always marvellous, the ballerinas are sparkling, but the settings and even the conception of the ballet, are, from our point of view, very much out of date.

Such are the fruits of 35 years of isolation. Today, more than ever, art lives by contacts.

We much regret that, owing to lack of space, Ferdinand Reyna's report on the Babilée and Laurent seasons have had to be held over until our next issue.

Photo right: *Ulanova in* Romeo and Juliet

BOLSHOI PLANS FOR LONDON

FURTHER news reaches us of the Bolshoi Theatre Ballet's plans for their coming London season. The smaller Bolshoi Filial Theatre which is nearer the size of Covent Garden, has been taken over for rehearsals. Those for *Giselle* have already been carried out there.

Giselle, the first of the four ballets to be fully rehearsed remains unaltered except for a reduction in the size of the corps de ballet. Raisa Struchkova will dance Giselle and Yuri Zhdanov, Albrecht. Hilarion will be danced by Alexander Lapauri. Musa Gottleib will be partnered by Georgi Farmanyantz in the first act pas de deux. The role of Myrtha will be taken by Rimma Karelskaya.

Londoners are already acquainted with Raisa Struchkova and her husband Alexander Lapauri, whilst it was only in 1953 that Georgi Farmanyantz gave some stirring exhibitions of leaps and double tours en l'air when he visited London. Musa Gottleib appeared in the excerpt from *Flames of Paris* in the film Trio-Ballet.

Rehearsals are in progress on the more difficult *Romeo and Juliet*. Lavrovsky's use of mass crowds and lavish scenery will need to be revised with great care and attention to retain the full impact. Ulanova and Struchkova will share the role of Juliet, Zhdanov will dance Romeo, and Alexander Yermolayev, counted as one of Russia's greatest character dancers will be Tybalt. Khokhlov another of their brilliant male dancers, will dance the Troubadour.

Vera Khodasevich the artist has designed new sets for the revised fourth act of *The Fountain of Bakchisarai*. The sets for the first three acts remain the same, and except for one or two dances in the last act the choreography will be unchanged. Struchkova will dance the part of Maria the Polish princess who is abducted by a band of marauding Tatars. Maya Plisetskaya will dance the role of Khan Girei's jealous wife. Yermolayev will share with Lapauri the intensely dramatic role of Khan Girei. Vaclav, Maria's fiancé will alternate between Kondratov and Khokhlov. Highlight of this ballet is the solo of Nurali, the Khan's lieutenant, which will be danced alternately by Evdokimov and Kashani.

The new *Swan Lake* production is likely to prove interesting. It is based upon Tchaikovsky's original score, the one that Reisinger, the 19th century ballet-master, is reputed to have dismissed as undanceable. All the deleted pieces have been re-inserted, and the music is now as Tchaikovsky originally conceived it. It has been re-choreographed by Pyotr Gusev, Asaf Messerer and Alexei Varlamov. It received its first presentation at the Bolshoi on the last night of the Moscow season, June 30th. Maya Plisetskaya danced Odette-Odile and Nikolai Fadeyechev, Seigfried.

The difficult work of adaptation and revision of stage sets, casts and choreography, so as to retain as much of the original production when given in London, has been entrusted to a team of designers and choreographers under direction of the Bolshoi's chief ballet-master, Pyotr Gusev.

According to information the company is quite excited about its London visit. Many of the dancers are brushing up their knowledge of English, whilst others have started to learn it. The management have arranged for the whole of the company to attend a series of lectures on English History, Art and Culture.

A. J. COX

Next month: Another article by A. J. Cox on *The Bolshoi's new Swan Lake for Covent Garden*, with photographs of the ballets and stars of the Bolshoi Company.

Australian Theatre Ballet

WALTER GORE WRITES TO THE EDITOR

I DO not know Mr. O'Brien's qualifications for writing on ballet, but he certainly has no first hand knowledge of the Australian Theatre Ballet. Had he referred only to me I would not have bothered to read him a second time, but he touched harshly on a company of fine young dancers and there I must take strong exception to his ill-chosen and unfounded observations. So ill-chosen and unfounded that I can only think they were suggested to him.

He says—"the corps was of such a poor standard that he (referring to me) was forced to reduce the actual content of dancing to a minimum".

Now, these words of his are quite false and cause one to wonder just how many performances of the Australian Theatre Ballet he witnessed in Adelaide or Melbourne. Far from having to reduce the dance content I even added to it in many places, so highly delighted was I with the rapid progress they made, with their abilities and with their comprehension of the mood and style required in each different ballet.

Admittedly, when the company set its feet first on a stage in Bendigo, it was not good—but then I didn't expect it to be. No one surely expects a three months old baby to do anything but stumble about, and these people were like that. The company had its first rehearsal three months prior to opening; they were young, inexperienced in matters balletic, quite unfamiliar with the type of work they were to do so well later, and completely unversed in stage deportment, etiquette and make up. They had yet to learn how to enter the stage and how to leave it; how to move softly yet with speed; how to dance with freedom yet remain in control of their bodies; how to acknowledge applause without self-consciousness. These, but a few of the many things every stage performer has to learn take years to master. So how could they be at that stage of events, anything but what they mostly were—promising students. Yet, six months from that opening they were ready for a professional showing, and given a further six months of continuous work I would have shown them anywhere in the world with pride.

That is how potentially good they were and after twenty-five years and more of ballet activity around the world I know ballet potential when I see it.

In that company, which could so very easily have been to Australia what the Ballet Rambert has been to England, there was at least one dancer, Robin Haig, with every promise of a world standard in technique, and others who could and in fact will, find their place as soloists in any European company. Would your Mr. O'Brien like their names ? Barry Wilkinson, Barbara Krowthen, Robin Farquhar, and Mel Clifford. Of the others who will take longer to reach a high technical standard there were those who possessed that very rare quality of creating a mood and sustaining an atmosphere, so as to remain within the ballet itself, in particular Christina Denny and Sally Adams. Let Mr. O'Brien not dismiss such dancers lightly because if he knows anything at all about ballet he will realise the very great importance of this quality. No dancer ever becomes great without it. I know to my sorrow how rare this is and when I do come across it I value it highly.

These then were the dancers of promise he shrugs off so contemptuously: those young dancers who improved so rapidly that even I hardly recognised them as the same students who began their professional ballet careers in Bendigo under such depressing conditions. These are some of the dancers of Australia's Tomorrow in Ballet and Mr. O'Brien makes a big mistake in dismissing them so lightly.

I was proud to work with them and thank them here, publicly, for every drop of sweat they so willingly gave me without question. I thank them for their loyalty, their enthusiasm and their very real ability to grasp what was expected of them. I salute their integrity and the promise the future holds for them.

I fear Mr. O'Brien has got hold of the wrong end of the stick and I suggest he should write a letter of apology to each and every one of those young dancers who, by his ignorance of things balletic, have been so wrongly slandered.

Finally, his implied reason for the company having to disband is so wide of the mark that once again I wonder what his qualifications for writing on ballet, and Australian Theatre Ballet in particular, can possibly be.

Yours truly

WALTER GORE,

Amsterdam, July 10.

The remarks to which Mr. Gore refers in this letter were contained in John O'Brien's review of Australian Ballet published in our December (1955) issue.

Our October issue will contain Walter Gore's own account of the Australian ballet scene.

BRAZIL

Writing from Rio de Janeiro, Oleg Briansky tells me how much he enjoyed dancing with Alicia Markova in *Giselle*, which is now, he says, his favourite ballet. Their season in Rio and São Paulo at an end, Oleg stayed on in Rio for a month, he then returns to New York and later in the year will visit Europe.

Photo: Richard Sasso

Next month's issue will contain news from Budapest, written by Maria Szanto, on the presentation of the Miraculous Mandarin *by the Hungarian State Opera.*
In her letter, Maria Szanto, who is a member of the corps de ballet, says what pleasure it gave her to read news of her *company in previous issues of BALLET TODAY. It is our policy to publish news from every country and evidence that we are being read in practically every part of the world will be found in our columns every month.*

HOW A BALLET IS BORN

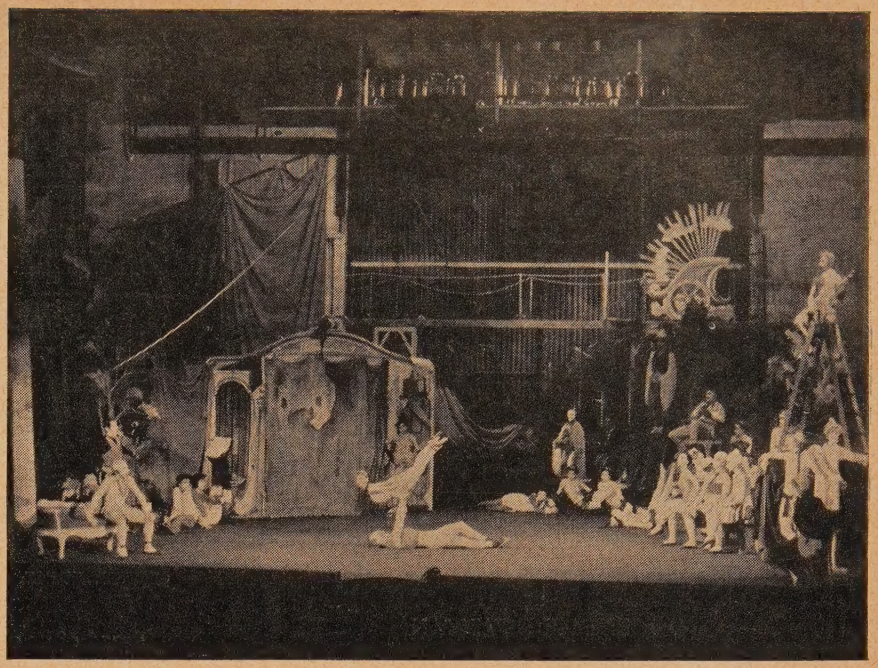
The work of

Alan Carter

by

ELISABETHE CORATHIEL

writing from Munich



THE large, bare room, has its walls covered with row upon row of water-colour sketches—evocative scenes, mystic subjects, decorative details, costume suggestions. Rhythmic lineal extemporisations suggest a fertile brain and a profound understanding of music. Glancing round this Atelier in which the young, vital, keenly intellectual Alan Carter dreams, plans and works, one can conjecture how dynamic is the personality responsible for the recent revolution in ballet at Munich's State Opera House.

Alan Carter came to Munich less than two years ago, having only the vaguest general idea of what was expected of him. A "first programme" had been tentatively discussed with Rudolf Hartmann, who, rushing in where angels fear to tread, had blithely suggested *Petrouchka* for a start. More promising was the suggestion that something new might be built on Ravel's *Tombeau de Couperin*, and for good measure an original work by the resourceful Rodrigues was projected.

Alan turned the assignment over while putting the company through their paces. They were decidedly raw material. In twenty years the resident dancers had had more than ten ballet masters. There was no continuity, no recognisable classical "School". He had to start almost from scratch.

The first hint of his inventive genius burst upon a receptive Bavarian public when the Ravel experiment was launched under the title of *Vier Mal Vier*.

"Munich had given me my opportunity—the sort of chance every choreographer dreams about but seldom gets," was Alan's summing up. "The challenge of Ravel's score, playful in its underlying satire, yet capable of serious treatment, was irresistible. Everything would depend upon the handling of the theme, and I conceived a scheme in which all the patterns would be danced by groups of four. This presented a fascinating problem in choreography since every movement had to be multiplied by the four sets, the fundamental figures being quadrupled in a kind of choreographic equivalent of counterpoint. The demands made on the dancers' technique were considerable, since they were called upon to execute not only four variations of steps and movements, but also to display corresponding sensitivity of expression, mood and characterisation."

It was an unmistakable foretaste of the young choreographer's quality and commanded for his future activities the kind of powerful respect which gives such encouragement, and of which Munich's art-loving connoisseurs are eminently capable. It proved the most hopeful augury for Alan Carter's sojourn in their midst.

For the provocative *Hans der Shatten* he must have drawn some inspiration from the sadly bomb-damaged Opera House which is the scene of his creative labours. The theme is an audition for theatrical artists, and into it he has thrown all the excitement, the humour and the pathos of back-stage life. The planning of the actual dance-pattern took so much time that no suitable artists could be discovered to execute Alan's projected decor (with him this is always a matter of vital importance, and he takes immense pains over his choice of scenic designers). In the end a make-shift set was designed, just "thrown together" from any oddments that came to hand. Blue was the dominant colour and, skilfully lit, it proved extraordinarily effective.

It is precisely because he possesses a marked talent for graphic design, plus exceptional musical gifts and an extraordinary "theatre sense" that Carter is able to break new ground with an impact which is often breath-taking.

Scrooge, with which he delighted Munich last Christmas (its social-historical implications found an echoing sympathy in a town so often ravaged by the poverty consequent upon recurrent wars) was really an elaborated re-hash of a London experiment in 1951, originally suggested to him by his mother.

Of course the story came first. The great problem was to find appropriate music for the new German version. "At the very last moment I had the good luck to meet Zoltan Fekete, who suggested some of Josef Suk's compositions," he told me. "Immediately I heard them played over, my mind was made up. I consider them ideal for this subject—whether I am right or not, of course the audience must judge.

"The many scenes that must necessarily be incorporated in order to convey the story to an audience possibly unfamiliar with it, and the difficulties involved in clarifying the motives and behaviour of the numerous characters, caused many a headache. The chief dilemma was to find a choreographic style that would suit the work and at the same time suggest the atmosphere of the original John Leech illustrations.

"Whilst assembling and sorting my ideas, I started sketching. Gradually a complete analysis emerged; but the work was stupendous, and the processes had been painful. Having got so far I decided to take on the decor as well as the choreography. Any shortcomings rest on my shoulders alone. Yet, in assuming full responsibility, I do not want it to be thought that I received no help! My grateful thanks are due to all my colleagues, in particular to Joan Harris, whose loyalty and constructive criticism have been a never-failing aid, and to the ballet group itself, which has taken such immense pains to fulfil the heavy tasks I have imposed."

Above: Hans der Shatten

Photo: Studio Sabine Toepfier

How a Ballet is Born

Copies of the following are still available:

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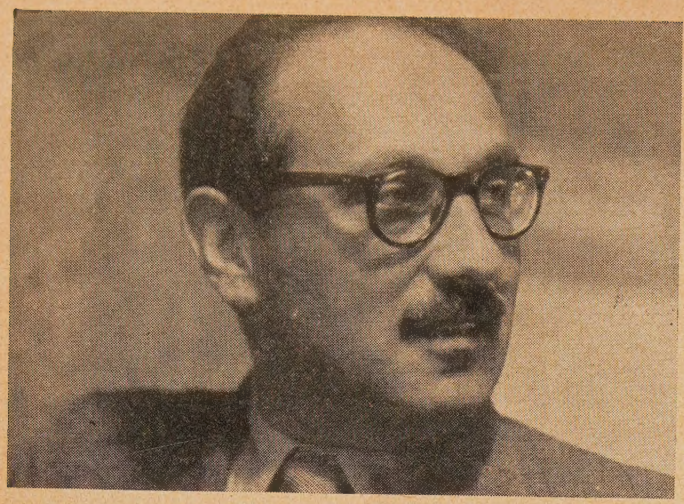

Musician at the Ballet

by

MONTAGUE CALMAN

THE INN AND I

HIDING away from editorial deadlines, I went into the village pub run by ex-journalist Frank. Giving me a drop-dead-pan look he slopped a small drink over to me with " What's it like these days covering ballet? Anything worthwhile at all? "

Worthwhile? Away from the glamour of first nights, the buzz of interval chatter, the clinging aroma of fine perfume and the fervent applause of the performers' friends, I sipped my drink and wondered.

" Well," I answered, " I can just about remember a few recent things in London."

I recalled the recent visit of The Hungarian State Company of Dance, Song and Music (Palace Theatre). They brought the true spirit of the folk dance and song under a proscenium arch without losing any of the pulsating vitality and haunting charm characteristic of the gypsy way of life. This company used both choir and orchestra to give additional colour to the presentation.

Scorning sheet music on stands the orchestra played from memory with vivacity and musicianly fervour. Led by Istvan Albert, a smiling gypsy violinist whose infectious grin cloaked his superb control over the players, they gave us Liszt's *Hungarian Rhapsody No.* 2. How compelling was this sparklingly fresh interpretation of a vintage work.

A POETIC SAINT

The Men's Dance of Gyorgyfalva—music by Laszlo Gulyas—introduced us to the first cellist. Looking like a dark-haired poetic saint he produced an ethereal tone. Warm, lusciously rich creamy sounds poured forth from his instrument. Zoltan Kodaly's music for *The Pictures of the Matra* spotlighted both choir and orchestra. A folksong symphony with a slow *parlando rubato* song about a famous outlaw, it gave the dance itself a background of touching pathos.

Simple, yet captivating, was Gulyas's gentle love music for *First Love*, a dance showing an awkward village lad in love. While certainly most exciting was *The Herdsmen's Dance* with Tihamer Vujicsics providing some galloping rhythms for the dancers.

" All right," said my host, " here is a glass of Tokay wine."

SADLER'S WELLS WELCOME

We then discussed the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Now primarily a touring company it recently spent a welcome fortnight at its home, The Sadler's Wells Theatre, introducing a few new ballets. One of the new pieces was *Solitaire*. Light in essence and pure in style, *Solitaire* is well matched to Malcolm Arnold's tuneful, lush score. The music is from his *Suite of English Dances*, expanded to contain a jazzy number for a *soubrette* (Sara Neil). Arnold's main musical theme is a beautifully expert crib on an English modal folk song.

During that same evening the Theatre Ballet gave three other Macmillan choreographic creations. Were the Wells not such respectable people I would rename his *Somnabulism*, more daringly *Nudes In The Night*. Like many other ballets orchestrated by conductor John Lanchbery, this one reveals his musicianship. It was no mean task to take the original Stan Kenton theme from a gramophone disc and produce a full orchestral score from it. Stan Kenton's music for this dance was full of sensuous foaming cascades of sound mixed up with raucous ravages against the ear. He did not succeed in marrying progressive jazz with contemporary orchestral music in this excursion into balletic matrimony. But it was an interesting experiment nevertheless.

NAMING A FEW PIT WORKERS

Proud of its choreographers, the Wells devoted another evening to Rodrigues' ballets. The new one in the bunch was *Saudades*, the phoniest concoction I have ever seen or heard at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. Denis ApIvor provided the music, which was trite and discordant. No two musical passages meant more than a series of notes strung together. For me it was pretentious, futile, balletic rubbish.

ApIvor's score for *Blood Wedding* is blood curdling and has dramatic colour. *Café des Sport*, always good for a laugh, has Antony Hopkins' lively score to keep the fun well distributed between stage and orchestra pit. Keith Deacon, clarinet and Tony Scott, timps, helped to make Lanchbery's band of musicians sound one of London's most enthusiastic orchestras. The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet Orchestra led by Anna Lampe is certainly a lively troupe of players.

ON THE SOUTH BANK

Talking to my host had made me glow with the alcohol of innly kindness for Frank can be a genial companion. So I carried on and we began to talk about the Festival Ballet. Now at the Royal Festival Hall these dancers have achieved much since last year. But the Festival Ballet Symphony Orchestra, led by Emanuel Hurwitz, and conducted by Geoffrey Corbett, disappointed.

At times Corbett is not very sympathetic to the dancers. In *Les Sylphides* he took the opening at a ludicrously slow pace, seriously threatening the corps de ballet's precision. Tempo is a vital factor in ballet. Too slow a pace can leave the dancers in mid-air, while to speed up the tempo may result in them fighting for their balance.

The Festival Ballet brought to London *Homage to a Princess*. In the words of the programme it is a work dedicated to *S.A.S. the Princess Grace Patricia of Monaco*. Jazz composer Stan Kenton produced an ill-fitting score often only using six players out of the large orchestra. The melody just about kept the dancers moving.

" Bedtime," said Frank. " Have my Monaco Special? "

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BERYL GREY

TO dance four leading roles at the age of fourteen is an accomplishment difficult to equal. Beryl Grey did this when she danced *Sylphides*, *Gods go a-Begging* and *Comus*, and then *Swan Lake* in its entirety on her fifteenth birthday.

Having won a scholarship at the age of nine to the Sadler's Wells Ballet School, she joined the Sadler's Wells Ballet Company in 1942. The war had reduced its numbers and illness further depleted the Company. This was Beryl's opportunity, and she became a baby ballerina overnight. She has remained, ever since, with the Company, dancing all the leading classical roles at an exceptionally young age.

With this very early beginning, Beryl has danced in many countries, amongst them the United States of America, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Holland, Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy and Portugal, all of which have shown their appreciation and interest. Because each country has its own atmosphere, Miss Grey finds foreign travel and dancing in other countries a fascinating experience, each country shows its interest in varied ways, and is therefore a source of inspiration to the visiting artist.

Miss Grey is married and has one child, a boy. She enjoys home life and is a very good cook. All her ambitions, however, are centred on her profession, and with the humility of the true artist she works to that end, to perfect her dancing in every role she undertakes, never to be satisfied with what she has already achieved.

Her leisure time is fully occupied, she has many interests and hobbies. She paints, plays the piano, is a great gramophone fan, a good swimmer and likes yachting.

Collecting swans must be a favourite hobby with ballerinas, because Beryl, too, has an enormous collection of all kinds, and in different materials, cloth, feathers, glass and metal. Her favourite is one given to her by the Gallery "regulars"—made of pale blue glass on an ebony base. This has a permanent place on her dressing table. Some of her collection can be seen in the picture above.

Left: *Checkmate*, 1955

Photo: *Baron*

Right: *Odette in Le Lac des Cygnes*

Photo: *Houston Rogers*

CAREERS IN PICTURES

roles danced

Swan Lake:
Odette-Odile

Sleeping Beauty:
Princess Aurora
and
Lilac Fairy

Sylvia

Giselle
and
Queen of the Wilis

Ballet Imperial:
Black Ballerina
and
Yellow Ballerina

Comus:
Sabrina
and
The Lady

Birds:
Nightingale

Dante Sonata:
Child of Light
and
Child of Darkness

Don Juan:
The Young Wife

Donald of the Burthens:
Death

Wedding Bouquet:
Violet

Lady and the Fool:
Lady

Birthday Offering.

Homage to the Queen:
Fire

Les Sirènes
Lady Kitty

Gods Go a-Begging:
The Serving Maid

The Quest:
Duessa

Rendezvous:
Chief Promeneur

Scenes de Ballet:
Sylphides
Prelude
Mazurka
Pas de Deux and
Waltz

Facade:
The Polka

Hamlet:
Queen
and
Ophelia

Cinderella:
Winter

Nocturne:
Rich Girl

Coppelia:
Prayer
and
Dawn

Tricorne:
Miller's Wife

Orpheus:
Love

Patineurs:
Pas de Deux
and
Promenade

Casse Noisette
Sugar Plum F.

Checkmate:
The Black Que

Opposite page: *Top left*: Death *in Donald of the Burthens*, (*Autumn* 1951)
Bottom left: Sylvia, (*Spring* 1955.)
Bottom right: Princess Aurora *in Sleeping Beauty Act I*, (1952.)
Photos: *Baron.*

This page: Lady *in The Lady and the Fool*, (*June* 1955.)

BERYL GREY

Four events which continually recur in a ballerina's life

(1) *Packing for a trip.* (2) *Arrival—in this case Beryl was in New York, and is looking out over the housetops of that city.* (3) *Last minute touches and final glance in the mirror before the reception, or the performance.* (4) *Have I got everything? before finally closing the front door of her apartment.*

THE PHYSICAL SIDE OF DANCING

By DONALD F. FEATHERSTONE, M.C.S.P.

A DANCER is an athlete. There should be no controversy about that statement, very little takes place on the sports field or track that can be said to include as many involved, varied and controlled movements of the body as those witnessed during the performance of a reasonably complicated dance routine. Both the athlete and the dancer require a high standard of physical and mental fitness, both expend large amounts of physical energy and utilise considerable periods of time in practice and preparation. All this requires physical fitness, the chances of reaching the heights of fame being in proportion to the physical standards attained, coupled with a high degree of technical perfection.

Bearing this in mind, it is as well to consider the main headings under which physical preparation can be grouped—these are balance, flexibility, agility, strength, power and stamina. Any dancer who possesses all these qualities will be light, agile and able to perform movements with a minimum of effort and will have complete control over their bodies. The physically trained dancer will also have the added attribute of a marked mental gain, because well trained people feel good, they look fit and possess a light step, springy gait, head held high with alert eyes and a clear brain. Every dancer would perform better and enjoy their dancing more if they felt that way!

ARE PEOPLE 'BORN' DANCERS

It is a well known fact that some people are said to be 'born' dancers, they go from strength to strength and reach the top rank, whilst others never attain fame in spite of the most arduous and conscientious practice. The gift of the 'born' dancer is the same as that of the 'born' athlete—they both possess a very high degree of nervous control over their movements, a blessing not possessed by more than one person in a million. However, it is possible for the less gifted to compensate for that lack of nervous control by progressive physical training. That vital matter of timing, for instance, can be vastly improved by training, as an American experiment recently proved. Trained and untrained athletes had to press a push-button signal as soon as a coloured light flashed in front of them—in every single case the intricate timing apparatus showed that the trained man's reaction was quicker than that of the untrained man.

FACTORS WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS

What are the factors responsible for success in all forms of physical activity? It can be assumed that 20% is due to self-confidence, another 20% depends upon skill and technique—great dancers rarely have any outstanding physical development, the differences between them and the average performers are due to practice, their technique and judgment contributing as much as physique to their success. Physiology, or the way in which the body works, accounts for another 40%, this includes such factors as the way in which the body uses up energy, the efficiency of the heart and lungs, how the muscles operate and why they become tired. And the final 20%? That very elusive 20% that goes to make up the sum total of the factors on which success depends is a rather nebulous affair—in the world of sport such men as Dr. Roger Bannister are endeavouring to track it down, until they get nearer their goal we will not know entirely what makes the athlete and the dancer tick!

PHYSICAL FITNESS AND THE DANCER

What other benefits can physical fitness bring to the dancer? In any person engaged in arduous physical activity injury prevention largely depends upon their standards of physical fitness. From the training that leads to high standards of fitness is attained the 'tone' and strength in muscles so that they are able to act in a controlled fashion with a minimum of fatigue. This enables the muscles to adequately protect the joints on which they work from strains and twists so common in physical activity. It is well known also that a preliminary 'warming-up' is very necessary before commencing one's performance. The purpose of this 15–30 minute manoeuvre before beginning strenuous activity is to increase the local circulation and loosen up the muscles and tendons, thus enabling them to better withstand sudden strain or shock.

DANCING KEEPS YOU YOUNG

In this world it is an odd thing, everyone admits that physical fitness is a desirable and worthwhile attribute but few people can be bothered to take the trouble to acquire that fitness! If physical training promises so much in raising the standards of performance and aids in the prevention of fatigue why is it so ignored? It might be that we all need a literal 'kick in the pants', it might be because of lack of realisation, or maybe it is because like education, the benefits are mostly in the future. The first day of any training routine will leave the muscles sore, because the muscular system does not like the extra burden. But after the tenth day, if we go with it that long, little or no stiffness is felt, because the body has become more efficient. After a month or six weeks, many adjustments have been made, improvements are noted in the nerves, circulation, breathing, muscles have become more shapely and firmer, fat has gone and digestion has improved. We feel younger because our bodies are more active. It is well known that theatrical women keep their facial tissues young by keeping them active, using massage and bathing in hot and cold water. In the same way, exercise improves the circulation and the better your body cells are washed by the blood, the younger they remain. Remember, you don't grow old—you just stop growing!

Next Month: Dancing Can Be Dangerous.

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BOOKS

Reviewed by
PIGEON CROWLE

Hungarian Rhapsody. Ed. Laszlo Tarr. (*Corvina Press, Budapest. English distributors, Collets Holdings Ltd.*, 35*s.*)

It is not often that one comes across a book on the dance that has been so beautifully produced as this one. To turn the pages is sheer delight, so well laid out are they, in the gay and charming drawings in full colour by the company's designer, Gitta Mallász, the dancers look like peonies in their bright peasant dresses. The numerous photographs really do capture the verve, colour and high spirits of the Hungarian company of singers, dancers and musicians that visited London in July, while some of the many pretty girls in the troupe may be recognised in the delicate crayon drawings of heads and head-dresses. There are also a number of reproductions of the musical settings of some of the songs collected and arranged especially for the singers and musicians by composers such as Bártok and Kodály.

The story of the formation of this company (bountifully subsidised by the State) in 1950 is told in some detail. Hungary is rich in folk dance and music but performance in restaurants and cafés had added many artificialities and this was an endeavour to recreate from the original sources. Most of the singers and dancers are recruited from amateur village or factory groups—the big moustached dancer, for instance, who readers will well remember for his terriffic elan and virtuosity, was a railway worker. The instrumentalists were leading players in gypsy orchestras.

It is interesting to learn that the company's dancers start their day with an hour's ballet class. At first this was not very popular for a certain aversion was felt to a style so foreign to their national movement. But when they discovered that ballet lessons were valuable as a means of developing the body and maintaining condition, they soon began to love them and to appreciate the technical proficiency and strength they acquired as a result.

I can thoroughly recommend this book. Even the endpapers—in colour and reproducing traditional peasant embroidery—are a joy.

Covent Garden Books No. 9. The Sadler's Wells Ballet 1931/56. *Ed. Michael Wood*, 5*s.*

The latest Covent Garden Book, splendid in silver, records twenty-five years of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. It will please those of us who have followed the ballets' fortunes since the early days, for it is plentifully illustrated with photographs of past and present members as well as the various artists who have worked with the two companies during these eventful years, and there are photographs, souvenirs and accounts of some great occasions. As a handy quick reference the book has its particular uses, there are complete lists of all the dancers, composers, choreographers and designers who have been associated with the ballet since that first performance at the Old Vic on 5th May, 1951 (full cast list and details given of this and other occasions to the present day).

They are impressive and scintillating lists, but even more impressive are the maps showing the extensive nature of the foreign tours undertaken by these ambassadors from Great Britain. One has only to turn the pages to realise how great a National Asset are these two companies, and for this reason and in view of the present financial situation at Covent Garden, I would like to send my copy heavily underlined and annotated to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

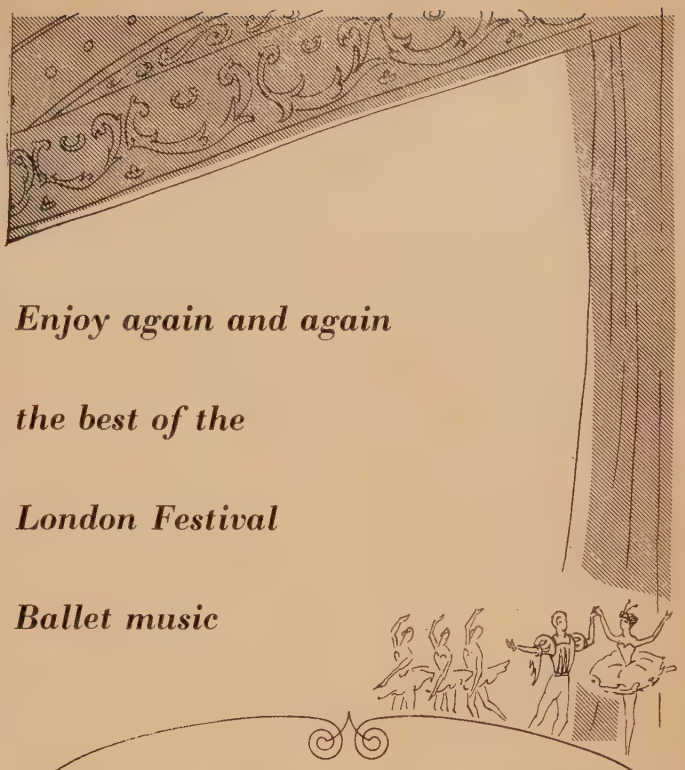
London's Festival Ballet Annual, 1956-57. *Ed. by George Hall.* (*The Gray's Inn Press Publications*, 21*s.*)

When Markova lay in bed recovering from an operation for appendicitis, she was asked if she would find a suitable name for the new company Julian Braunsweg was forming and which she and Dolin were to lead.

During the long wakeful hours of convalescence, an idea came to her: "It will soon be Festival Year in England," she thought, "What about Festival Ballet?"—and Festival Ballet it was. Opening in October 1950, it went in 1952 after a series of London seasons to the Royal Festival Hall which became its permanent summer home.

This is the first annual to be entirely devoted to the work of the company and its artists, and the detailed survey includes much information on ballet in general. Also for the first time in any publication I have seen, there are, besides biographical "profiles" of the various soloists, thumbnail sketches of every member of that hardworking backbone of any company—the corps de ballet. Contributions include Sacheverell Sitwell, Peter Williams, A. V. Coton and Sonia Roberts. The last two writers are well-known to readers of this magazine. The numerous photographs are excellent and include the

(*Continued on next page*)



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I would like to draw your attention to a statement on the dust cover of the new edition of "Principles of Movement and Dance Notation" by Laban. It is to the effect that Labanotation is taught in the curriculum at The Sadler's Wells School and The Sadler's Wells Company.

In point of fact, the question of including this work in our school was considered two years ago, but a series of circumstances made it impossible to carry the plan to its conclusion. Since this matter was dropped, there has arisen a great deal of interest in notation in general, including a new form known as the Benesh Notation. There is in the Upper School at Sadler's Wells a class studying the Benesh Notation, but on a voluntary basis; it is not included in the general Junior School curriculum.

Time and the dancer alone will decide which of the existing notation methods will prove to be the most practical for the classical ballet to use. At the present stage, I am an onlooker; I feel sure that dancers are being offered unusual facilities, in many directions, to take up these various forms of notation-study. Some of these systems are in a position to state a claim of many years standing—but it is clear that sooner or later one particular system will have to obtain a more widespread hearing than has been the fortune of any of them to date.

Ninette de Valois.

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, LONDON.
18*th June*, 1956.

BOOKS (continued from previous page)

life story of Anton Dolin and the training of John Gilpin in pictures.

In spite of insurmountable difficulties imposed by the shallow, improvised stage, cramped wings and rudimentary lighting at the Festival Hall, the company presents an impressive repertoire of old and contemporary masterpieces as well as new ballets as this book illustrates.

Besides the long and successful London season, the ballet visits some thirty to forty provincial and foreign theatres during the course of the year. But the overheads of a ballet company are colossal, as most people know, and Festival Ballet plays without state aid or grants. To be self-supporting is not a bad thing, but it must be, eventually, at the sacrifice of new productions, dresses, scenery and experimental work; and no company can maintain a standard if these sort of economies are usual. This book has been published to give some financial help to a company without which the ballet scene would be very much the poorer.

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The Dual Career of Soledad Miralles

Dancer and Bullfighter

By David Benn

our correspondent in Madrid

WRITING for a dance magazine has its drawbacks. Your observations may take you many months, a few lines of newsprint bearing your name is the ultimate result, and even this will only reach a limited public. If a consensus of opinion be taken amongst dance writers, however, they would tell you that there is no other subject they would rather write about. Why? Because in the course of their work they meet the most interesting people all over the world with kindred interests.

This is what happened to me here in Spain a few days ago. Into my room overlooking Madrid's historic Puerta del Sol came two visitors, a boy and girl in their early twenties. From the girl's bearing it was immediately evident that she was a dancer. Speaking in English with a broad American accent, she introduced herself and her partner Luis Principe. They had called upon me to discuss my articles on Flamenco dancing, published recently in BALLET TODAY.

We talked about this for some time but finally I could resist the temptation no longer. Would it, I tentatively enquired, be possible for me to meet the girl's mother—Soledad Miralles, almost a legendary figure in Spain, better known in America than England, as a famous dancer in her younger days? They reached for the telephone, and twenty minutes later she too was in my room.

GRACIA

As Señora Miralles talked to us over a glass of sherry we were quite content to listen. Scarcely had she sat down when her eyes strayed to the copy of BALLET TODAY open on my desk. " Bien documentado " she remarked in her broad Andalusian dialect " but the best Company in Spain was mine." " There is one quality you cannot give a dancer " continued Soledad Miralles " in Spain we call it ' gracia '. Don't ask me to explain it, I cannot, the only way I can describe it is by telling you it is something which sends you into a frenzy whenever you hear the guitar, it sends your arms whirling through the air of their own accord, without it a dancer can never be more than a technician.

ACROBATICS

" There are some good non-Spanish flamenco dancers," she admitted in answer to my question, " but they are rare, how can a foreigner hope to have ' gracia ' when so few Spaniards have it? How can you express to an audience an emotion you yourself cannot feel?"

She looked at me accusingly. " Of course you are to blame for the kind of Spanish dancing you see. You ask for your Spanish dancing to be wild and spectacular with many acrobatics, and there are many willing to give you just that."

Luis Principe, who up to now had said very little, joined in. " Last year," he said, " I was dancing in Paris, and I met a good friend of mine with whom I had studied the dance. He was dancing in a club nearby, I went along to see him. Yes, his performance was certainly spectacular, but it wasn't Spanish and neither was the music which had been ' jazzed up ' for the show. I was so disappointed I could not go round to see him afterwards." I have heard similar sentiments from other artists, their only wish is to interpret their art with absolute integrity, without the kind of showmanship which is making so-called flamenco a commercial proposition.

IN THE BLOOD

" Even in Spain, " continued Soledad, " few people really understand flamenco; it is not really a matter of understanding, it is an intuition. I have danced professionally since I was fourteen, and my three sisters were also dancers, you might say it is in my blood, but the best and most appreciative audience I ever had I found in the villages of Andalusia. Most of them were labourers, few of them could read in those days, but they knew how to shout ' Olé '. What we felt they felt too, and you *must* feel what you dance," she repeated emphatically, " that is why I took up bull-fighting."

Here I must tell you that in Spain, Soledad Miralles' fame as one of the few women bull-fighters does not rest on that fact alone—she is recognised as one of the better fighters, and is rated as a serious rival to some of the better-known matadors.

A CRUEL SPORT–

" Yes," she said with a rueful smile in answer to my question. " I've had some bad moments in the ring. Once I nearly lost my life. It was a brave bull, and a tough one for its years. As a woman I was not allowed to fight any bull of more than four years of age. I thought I had killed it, but in a split second it had gored me so badly I had to retire from the ring. Cruel? I don't think so, It can be a thing of pure splendour, and is as much a part of Spanish life as dancing. In many ways there are many similarities, for both professions you must be young, agile, enthusiastic and above all brave. A dancer's life requires courage in no small measure."

CREATING ARTISTS

Like many retired dancers Soledad Miralles has opened a dance school. I went along to it that same afternoon. Many pupils would like to study under her but she has selected only a few, and on these she lavishes all her attention. Not one point escapes her notice, everything has to be perfect down to the smallest detail. She has no time for temperament, still less for exhibitionism. Her pupils must be prepared to work until they drop. Those are her terms. An observer might label her a tyrant, but if he did so it would be unwise to say this to her pupils. The loyalty of the average English ballet student to their teachers is well-known, but I have never encountered the absolute devotion Soledad gets from her pupils. And she returns this devotion, fosters it into a relationship which brings out all the talent she knows is there in each of her selected pupils, and makes of them not only dancers but artists.

FULL BALLET GUIDE FOR THE MONTH

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE AT COVENT GARDEN

AUGUST

20th (Mon.)
Les Sylphides
Fall River Legend
Pas de Deux—Black Swan
Fancy Free

21st (Tues.)
Les Sylphides
Fall River Legend
Pas de Deux—Black Swan
Fancy Free

22nd (Wed.)
Les Sylphides
Fall River Legend
Pas de Deux—Black Swan
Fancy Free

23rd (Thurs.)
Giselle
Interplay

24th (Fri.)
Giselle
Interplay

25th (Sat. mat.)
Giselle
Interplay

25th (Sat. eve.)
Giselle
Interplay

27th (Mon.)
Swan Lake (Act II)
Billy The Kid
Offenbach in the Underworld

28th (Tues.)
Swan Lake (Act II)
Billy The Kid
Offenbach in the Underworld

29th (Wed.)
Swan Lake (Act II)
Billy The Kid
Offenbach in the Underworld

30th (Thurs.)
Theme and Variations
A Streetcar Named Desire
Pas de Deux—Don Quixote
Rodeo

31st (Fri.)
Theme and Variations
A Streetcar Named Desire
Pas de Deux—Don Quixote
Rodeo

SEPTEMBER

1st (Sat. mat.)
Theme and Variations
Combat
Pas de Deux—Black Swan
Rodeo

1st (Sat. eve.)
Theme and Variations
A Streetcar Named Desire
Pas de Deux—Don Quixote
Rodeo

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

SEPTEMBER

4th (Tues.)
Les Sylphides
The Miraculous Mandarin
(*1st performance in London*)
(*Fifield, Somes*)
The Lady and the Fool

5th (Wed.)
Le Lac des Cygnes
(*Fonteyn, Somes*)

6th (Thurs.)
Les Sylphides
The Miraculous Mandarin
Coppelia (Act III)

7th (Fri.)
Les Sylphides
Birthday Offering
The Lady and the Fool

8th (Sat. mat.)
Le Lac des Cygnes
(*Beriosova, Chatfield*)

8th (Sat. eve.)
Le Lac des Cygnes
(*Fifield, Blair*)

11th (Tues.)
Le Lac des Cygnes
(*Grey, Chatfield*)

12th (Wed.)
Les Patineurs
The Miraculous Mandarin
The Lady and the Fool

13th (Thurs.)
Noctambules
Symphonic Variations
The Miraculous Mandarin

14th (Fri.)
Les Sylphides
The Miraculous Mandarin
The Lady and the Fool

15th (Sat. mat.)
Les Patineurs
Giselle

15th (Sat. eve.)
Les Patineurs
Giselle

18th (Tues.)
Les Patineurs
Giselle

19th (Wed.)
The Miraculous Mandarin
Giselle
(*Beriosova, Blair*)

20th (Thurs.)
Noctambules
Giselle
(*Fonteyn, Somes*)

21st (Fri.)
Le Lac Des Cygnes
(*Jackson, Somes*)

22nd (Sat. mat.)
Le Lac Des Cygnes
(*Fifield, Blair*)

22nd (Sat. eve.)
Les Patineurs
Symphonic Variations
Birthday Offering

24th (Mon.)
The Miraculous Mandarin
Symphonic Variations
The Firebird

25th (Tues.)
The Miraculous Mandarin
Symphonic Variations
The Firebird

26th (Wed.)
Les Patineurs
The Miraculous Mandrin
The Firebird

27th (Thurs.)
Le Lac Des Cygnes
(*Beriosova, Chatfield*)

28th (Fri.)
The Miraculous Mandarin
Symphonic Variations
The Lady and the Fool

29th (Sat. mat.)
Les Patineurs
Noctambules
Birthday Offering

29th (Sat. eve.)
Les Patineurs
Noctambules
Birthday Offering

End of Ballet Season at Covent Garden

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Oct. 15th to 27th
Hippodrome Theatre, Coventry

Oct. 29th to Nov. 3rd
New Theatre, Oxford

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The Nutcracker (full version)
Grand Pas de Deux
(*La Esmeralda*)
Prince Igor

Thurs. 23 Aug. to Sat. 25 Aug.
The Nutcracker (full version)
The Pas de Quatre
Symphony for Fun

Mon. 27 Aug. to Thurs. 30 Aug.
Swan Lake (Act II)
Vision of Marguerite
Bolero
Napoli

Fri. 31 Aug. and Sat. 1 Sept.
Les Sylphides
Coppelia (Premiére)

Mon. 3 Sept. to Thurs. 6 Sept.
Swan Lake (Act II)
Coppelia

Fri. 7 Sept.
GALA PERFORMANCE in Celebration of the Sixth Anniversary of London's Festival Ballet. Guest artist: ALICIA MARKOVA (only appearance this season).

Sat. 8 Sept.
Swan Lake (Act II)
Coppelia

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL

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	10	*Hippodrome, Golder's Green*
	17	*Gaumont, Cardiff*
	24	*Theatre Royal, Newcastle*

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RECORDS

Reviewed by
BEDFORD CROWLE

TRUMPET CONCERTO IN E FLAT, *and* HARPSICHORD CONCERTO IN D (*Haydn*). *Vienna State Opera Orchestra* (*Litschauer*). *Vanguard PVL* 7012.

I enjoyed these two concerti immensely and both performance and recording are very good. George Eskdale's trumpet is so alive and happy but never steals more than its fair share of this delightful music. I expected a lot at the première of Balanchine's *Trumpet Concerto* but what an opportunity was missed with such a lively young company, and the lovely Beriosova as his ballerina as material. Here is another opportunity—don't let this enchanting record go by.

HAYDN PIANO SONATAS NOS. 46, 40, 31 AND 20. *Kathleen Long*. *Decca LXT* 5144.

Here is more Haydn with which to match the simplicity and charm of de Valois' ballet, *Promenade*. From these sonatas —at the suggestion of that great musicalogist and critic, the late Edward Evans—she used the first movement of No. 40 for *Les Merveilleuses* and the adagio of No. 46 for *Rendez-vous*. I need only add that Miss Long's performance is no less than we expect from so sensitive an artist and that I hope your pleasure will be as great as mine.

BEETHOVEN'S PIANO SONATAS NO. 32 AND NO. 21. *Solomon*. *HMV.ALP* 1160. *Also* NO. 32 AND NO. 23. *Julius Katchen*. *Decca LXT* 5187.

Beethoven's thirty-second sonata which formed part of Maria-Theresa's dance recital at the Carnegie Hall, N.Y., is far from easy to interpret. Good as Katchen's performance is, I feel that possibly he needs more time and experience at his back. This is where Solomon has the advantage which helps to build up his superiority. Deeper thought has been given to it, resulting in a finer conception of the sonata as a whole. The recording may not be quite so clear, but Solomon's rounder notes and good singing tone confirm my choice—I have no doubts.

KINDERTOTENLIEDER (*Mahler*). *Fischer-Dieskau* (*baritone*), *Berlin P.O.* (*Kempe*). *HMV.BLP* 1081.

Tudor's sombre ballet, *Dark Elegies*, painted a most poignant picture of Mahler's heartfelt work and is another proof of his great loss to British ballet. Fischer-Dieskau's dark voice is quite exceptionally used and beautifully recorded. In fact this is a disc I can recommend without reservation to admirers of this composer.

A FAUST SYMPHONY *and* LES PRELUDES (*Liszt*). *Paris Conservatoire Orchestra and Suisse Romande Orchestra respectively* (*Boult*). *Decca LXT* 5101–2.

Mediaeval German paintings of the dance inspired Adolph Bolm's *Mephisto* premièred by the San Francisco Civic Ballet, whose dancers gave a most moving and successful interpretation. The score included the first movement of Liszt's masterpiece and although the recording is excellent, the performance does not earn this praise. Nevertheless it should be heard, as it is the only LP issue. The fill-up, *Les Préludes* (Pavlova-Fokine) lacks intensity and contrast.

SYMPHONY NO. 1 *and* LEONORA OVERTURE NO. 2 (*Beethoven*). *Vienna P.O. and Berlin P.O. respectively* (*Furtwangler*). *HMV. ALP* 1324.

There was some fine dancing by the Ballets de France when we saw *Symphony* at the Stoll Theatre. And some fine choreography as well, by Charrat—if only it had not cut across itself, leaving in the air what might have been a beautiful sequence. The music is undoubtedly a "must" but the present record is unrewarding. Hear Karajan's greater richness in the first movement, Columbia 33CX1136, and his slightly faster tempo in the second—you will not hesitate.

Kostelanetz' well chosen excerpts from the *Sleeping Beauty*, Philips NBL 5027, are given with more sense of style than many of his other recordings and will certainly be enjoyed by his admirers. The music of Cranko's quaint and intriguing little ballet, *Children's Corner*, receives a very satisfactory interpretation by Albert Ferber, London EL 93078, but the disc is not consistent in tone. It is difficult to excel Gieseking on Columbia. The coupling is Debussy's *Estampes*. Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz*, Decca LXT 5142, used by Ashton in the *Vision of Marguerite* for Festival Ballet has a good sense of atmosphere and is helped by a fine recording. Three of the lesser Symphonic Poems complete the disc. Stokowski's *Scheherazade*, HMV.ALP 1339, I found too mannered and with little ebb and flow that this colourful music needs—it cannot be compared with Ansermet's on Decca LXT 5082.

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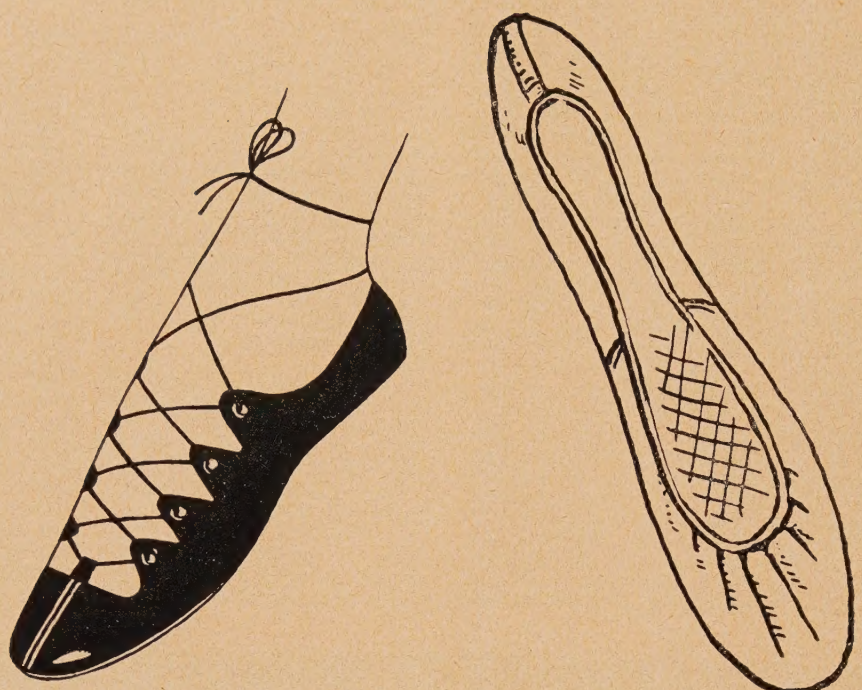

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Schools Page

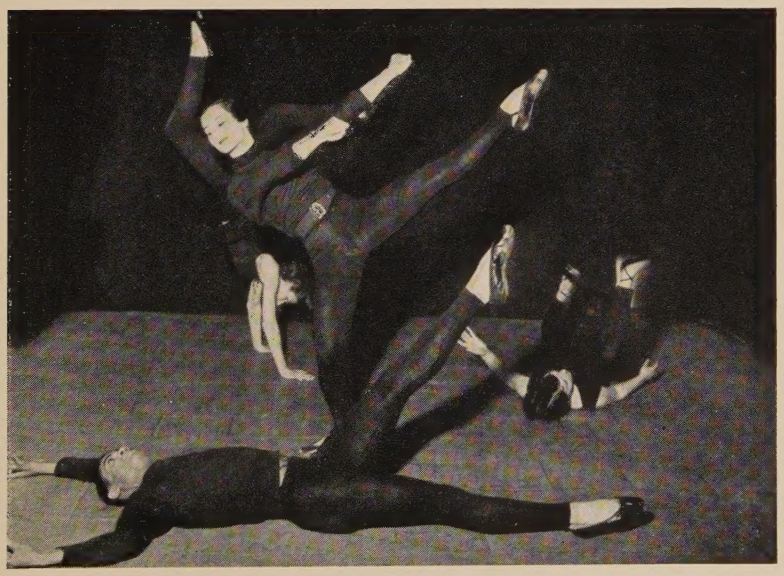
IT is a curious fact that, although we receive news from almost every part of the world, we seldom hear of any dancing activities in Ireland. It was therefore a pleasant surprise to pick up *The Evening Herald*, published in Ireland, to find this photograph of Madame Morosini Whelan, and a copy of BALLET TODAY prominently displayed on the piano. I wrote to Madame Morosini Whelan, and in her reply she modestly states that their activities are " not worth mentioning ", but I disagree, she is doing a lot of pioneering work in Dublin. Her boys and girls have taken part in Grand Opera and Musical Societies where character and ballet dancing are necessary, and they are at the moment getting ready a Fairy Play and a Ballet Soirée for the Group which will include *Les Préludes de Chopin.* In 1950 Madame Morosini Whelan visited India, and it was there that she met a Chinese ballerina who suggested she form an Irish Ballet Club. On her return she took steps to form the Dublin Ballet Production Club. Only those who have sponsored similar ventures can know the hard work and struggle which goes into such a venture, to raise funds for a wardrobe, find production costs, and the necessary talent and enthusiasm to carry on.

Our next picture a scene from *Tulip Time in Holland*, has been sent to us by Mrs. Gladys Jones from Wales, where she is doing much to interest the young children in ballet by putting on a matinée each summer. Her class is now in its fourth year and at the moment is busy rehearsing a ballet version of *Snow White*, the proceeds of which will go towards a new piano for the village hall. Previous shows have contributed towards velvet curtains for the stage.

Our photograph bottom right is of Helen May, once a pupil of the great Pavlova, and who has recently put on a matinée entitled *Then and Now* at the Rudolf Steiner Theatre. In June, Miss May recorded *Talk on Pavlova* for the B.B.C. and this is due to be broadcast this summer.

The last photograph is of the production group of the Hilde Holger School of Modern Ballet in *Men and Horses*, performed at the Enfield Technical College when the Enfield Ballet Club made their début there during the early part of the year. Seen in the picture are Dorothy Fraser and Loxley Russell, both from Jamaica, with Barbara Williams and Janet Taylor. The aim of this school is to give professional students a sound training in modern choreographic stage work, and with this in mind Miss Hilde Holger gives frequent performances and lecture demonstrations.

Men and Horses *Photo: Douglas Elston*



ALL THE STARS

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